

NORTH HERTFORDSHIRE DISTRICT COUNCIL

DECISION SHEET

Meeting of the Finance, Audit and Risk Committee held in the To be advised
on Wednesday, 7th September, 2022 at 7.30 pm

1 APOLOGIES FOR ABSENCE

Apologies for absence were received from Councillor Morgan Derbyshire who was substituted by Councillor Simon Bloxham.

2 MINUTES - 15 June 2022

RESOLVED: That the Minutes of the Meeting of the Committee held on 15 June 2022 be approved as a true record of the proceedings and be signed by the Chair.

3 NOTIFICATION OF OTHER BUSINESS

There was no other business notified.

4 CHAIR'S ANNOUNCEMENTS

- (1) The Chair welcomed those present at the meeting, especially John Cannon who is now the independent member for FAR.
- (2) The Chair drew attention to the item on the agenda front pages regarding Declarations of Interest and reminded Members that, in line with the Code of Conduct, any Declarations of Interest needed to be declared immediately prior to the item in question.

5 PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

There was no public participation.

6 External Auditors Annual Report 20-21

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the Auditors Annual Report presented by Ernst & Young

7 SAFS Annual Report 2021/22 - SAFS

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- (1) Note the Councils work to combat fraud in 2021/22
- (2) Note the performance of SAFS in meeting its KPIs in 2021/22
- (3) Note the progress with delivering the Anti-Fraud Plan for 2022/23

8 SIAS Annual Report 2021-22

RESOLVED: That the Committee note the SIAS Annual Report 2021/22

9 SIAS Progress Report 2022-23

RESOLVED: That the Committee:

- (1) Note the SIAS Progress Report for the period of August 2022
- (2) Note the plan amendments to the 2022/23 Annual Internal Audit Plan

10 Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24

RESOLVED: That the Committee note and comment on the Council Tax Reduction Scheme 2023/24

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet:

- (1) Note a full review is well underway and consultation with the public and Major Precepting Authorities will run for six weeks from 05 September 2022
- (2) Note progress made so far on the review and the intention is to introduce a new banded scheme for working age applicants from 01 April 2023
- (3) Note intention of review is to introduce a new scheme that will enable us to increase overall level of support for lowest income families and reduce administrative burden on Council, as well as making the scheme easier for our customers to understand and calculate entitlement
- (4) Note that modelling the new scheme may increase the costs from those of the current scheme

REASON FOR DECISIONS: To ensure that the Council has a fit for purpose Council Tax Reduction Scheme that:

- Provides the greatest support to the lowest income households
- Reduces the administrative burden that has been placed on the Council since the introduction of Universal Credit (UC)
- Is simple to understand, meaning that customers will be able to calculate entitlement and assess the impact of potential changes in circumstances.

11 FIRST QUARTER INVESTMENT STRATEGY (CAPITAL AND TREASURY) REVIEW 2022/23

RESOLVED: That the Committee note and comment on the First Quarter Investment Strategy (Capital and Treasury) Review 2022/23

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet:

- (1) Notes forecast expenditure of £12.252M in 2022/23 on the capital programme
- (2) Approves the adjustments to the capital programme for 2022/23 onwards, increasing the estimated spend in 2023/24 by £2.048M
- (3) Notes the position of the availability of capital resources and requirement to keep the capital programme under review for affordability
- (4) Note the position of Treasury Management activity as at the end of June 2022

REASON FOR DECISIONS:

- (1) Cabinet is required to approve adjustments to the capital programme and ensure the capital programme is fully funded
- (2) To ensure the Council's continued compliance with CIPFA's code of practice on Treasury Management and the Local Government Act 2003 and that the Council manages its exposure to interest and capital risk

12 FIRST QUARTER REVENUE BUDGET MONITORING 2022/23

RESOLVED: That the Committee note and comment on the First Quarter Revenue Budget Monitoring 2022/23

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet:

- (1) Note this report
- (2) Approves the changes to the 2022/23 General Fund budget, a £559k decrease in net expenditure
- (3) Notes the changes to the 2023/24 General Fund budget, a £414k increase in net expenditure
- (4) Delegates to the Service Director: Resources authority to enter in to a Business Rate Pooling arrangement (if available).

REASON FOR DECISIONS: Members are able to monitor, make adjustments within the overall budgetary framework and request appropriate action of Services who do not meet the budget targets set as part of the Corporate Business Planning process

13 Medium Term Financial Strategy

RESOLVED: That the Committee note and comment on the Medium Term Financial Strategy, including the recommendations that will be made to Cabinet.

RECOMMENDED TO CABINET: That Cabinet recommends to Full Council the adoption of the Medium Term Financial Strategy 2023-28

REASON FOR DECISIONS: Adoption of a MTFS and communication of its contents will assist in the process of forward planning the use of Council resources and in budget setting for 2023/24 to 2027/28. This will support the Council in setting a budget that is affordable and aligned to Council priorities.

14 POSSIBLE AGENDA ITEMS FOR FUTURE MEETINGS

The Chair requested that, should any Members have any suggestions for agenda items for future meetings, they advise himself, officers or the Committee Clerk.